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Committees: Labor, Commerce, Research & Development, ranking Republican;

Health & Long-Term Care; Ways & Means; Rules

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to a special “double issue” of my e-mail update for the months of August and September. Like so many of you, I’ve been busy the past couple of months combining work and other activities with vacation time. Now that we’re back home, it’s been fun to see kids returning to school and the apple harvest in full swing – two signs that summer is ending and fall is arriving.

Blue Ribbon Commission receives proposals for health care solutions

On September 11, I attended a meeting of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Costs and Access at the Doubletree Hotel near SeaTac Airport. This was a significant meeting because stakeholders were able to submit to the commission their proposals for solutions to health care cost and access problems facing our state. Some of these proposals were discussed at this meeting. More than 60 proposals were received for consideration by the commission. With supporting information, this totals over 600 pages of material. The proposals were combined into a single document and posted on the commission’s Web site.

You can view the proposals received for consideration by the Blue Ribbon Commission on its Web site at: <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/Joint/Committees/HCCA/>. It can be found under the September 11, 2006, meeting and also in the highlights box on the right side of the Web page.

Three-Tier Review Task Force

I’m serving this interim on the Three-Tier Review Task Force, whose purpose is to conduct a comprehensive review of the current regulatory system controlling the sale and distribution of beer and wine in Washington. The task force is reviewing how the state’s current beer and wine regulatory system began and whether it should continue in its present form.

This task force, which meets monthly, is comprised of legislators, representatives from law enforcement and the state Liquor Control Board, and stakeholders representing the producers, distributors, consumers, retailers and carriers of beer and wine in our state. The task force’s next meeting is this Thursday in Olympia. It has a December 15 deadline to make recommendations about any proposed changes to this regulatory system.

Regional events center has groundbreaking ceremony

On September 12, I had the honor of speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new regional events center in Wenatchee. It was a real joy to be at this event and feel the excitement

over this long-needed building. Once it's completed, our communities can host a wide variety of events (including athletic tournaments) that will be of regional or statewide importance.

Committee Assembly Days held in Spokane this week

Today wrapped up a two-day Senate event in Spokane called Committee Assembly Days. During the past two days, state senators attended Senate committee meetings and legislative caucus meetings to discuss issues. These special committee meetings normally are held in Olympia each September and December, but this fall they were held in Eastern Washington for the first time in 15 years.

Special legislative TV program to air on KREM, KSPS

While in Spokane last night, I joined five other state senators on a one-hour taped television show that likely will appear on Spokane's KREM-TV (Channel 2, CBS) and KSPS-TV (Channel 7, PBS) in the next few days.

The show, which was moderated by KREM anchor Randy Shaw, featured three Republican and three Democratic senators from Washington. Senators from both sides of the state were featured in the panel discussion, which focused on health care, economic development and transportation. We answered questions from an invited audience and from viewers and online subscribers who e-mailed KREM in advance. It was a fun and interesting show, and I enjoyed hearing questions about these important issues.

The program will air on KREM Friday this week from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. It will be shown on KSPS this Sunday (October 1) from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

In addition to airing on KREM next week, it also will be shown on KSPS, Spokane's PBS affiliate (Channel 7). I'll send you a special e-mail update providing the exact date and time this program will air on KREM and KSPS.

Talk with you soon!

Linda

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